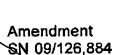
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- (twice amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said modifying comprises 2. replacing said packets associated with said desired time slot.
- (twice amended) The method of claim 2, wherein initial and replacement 3. packets associated with said desired time slot represent respective first and second programs.
- (amended) The method of claim 3, wherein one of said first and second programs comprises a NULL program.
- (amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of modifying packets further comprises:
- (1) examining a packet received from said received transport stream to determine if a slot associated with said received packet corresponds to an insertion slot for said second program to be inserted;
- (2) inserting, into an output transport stream, a next packet of said second [replacement] program if said slot associated with said received packet corresponds to an insertion slot for said second program to be inserted;
- (3) inserting, into said output transport stream, said received packet if said slot associated with said received packet does not correspond to an insertion slot for said second program to be inserted; and
- (4) repeating steps (1) through (3) for each packet of said received transport stream until a replacement stream has been fully inserted into said output transport stream.

. (twice-amended) An apparatus for processing a transport stream comprising N time slots for transporting therein N respective programs having a common time base indicated by a periodically inserted time stamp, said apparatus comprising:

a transport clock source CLK;





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a frequency divider for dividing a timing signal CLK from said transport clock source into N timing signals;

N transport encoders coupled to said frequency divider for respectively receiving and encoding said N programs; and

a multiplexer, coupled to an output of said N transport encoders, for receiving and modifying packets associated with a desired time slot of one or more transport encoded program streams, said multiplexer producing a processed transport stream, wherein said processed transport stream includes the same periodically inserted time stamp provided by said received transport stream.

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 (amended) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said modifying comprises replacing said packets associated with said desired time slot.

Supple

12. (amended) Apparatus for processing a transport stream comprising a plurality of time slots for transporting therein a respective plurality of programs having a common time base indicated by a periodically inserted time stamp, said apparatus comprising:

a transport clock source;

a frequency divider, for dividing a transport clock timing signal from said transport clock source into a plurality of timing signals; and

a plurality of encoders, each of said encoders coupled to said frequency divider for respectively receiving and encoding said plurality of programs to produce a respective encoded program stream, each of said encoded program streams being coupled to a switch via a respective buffer memory;

said switch selectively coupling program stream transport packets from said buffer memories for modifying packets associated with a desired time slot to produce a slotted transport stream, wherein said slotted transport stream includes the same periodically inserted time stamp provided by said received transport stream.

